
NEWS From:

Congressman Mike Honda

FIFTEENTH DISTRICT - CALIFORNIA



For Immediate Release

Sept. 11, 2002

Contact: Ruben Pulido Jr.

202.225.2631 ruben.pulido@mail.house.gov

Rep. Honda Statement on Anniversary of Sept. 11 Attacks

Today marks the one-year anniversary of one of the most tragic days in our country's history. I am proud of the way Americans have united following the horrific terrorist attacks on civilians. Neighbors who rarely spoke to each other, or people who did not even know each other shared their thoughts, compassion, and prayers for our fallen heroes. Our country is now stronger than ever.

Understandably, a lot of Americans are outraged following the attacks. Let it be clear that we will continue to hunt down those responsible for the attacks of Sept. 11, and those that may be foolish enough to plan to harm us again. We must also remember that we are not fighting a war with people of any specific ethnic group, nationality, or religion. We must be vigilant and wary of any efforts by the U.S. government or members of our citizenry to racially profile innocent people, as we wage our war against terrorism. I repeat the poignant words of a famous philosopher who once said "Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he doesn't become a monster."

As a child, I was a first-hand witness to civil injustice. My family and I were locked up in a U.S. internment camp during World War II only because we were of Japanese descent. There were many patriots during this war. Thousands of young Americans of Japanese ancestry fought and died for the very country that imprisoned their families. However, their loyalty to America never wavered.

Our war against terror is going to be a long-term engagement. Along the way we will need to be thoughtful and critical of many different courses of action. It will be more important than ever to ensure

that we all have the freedom to ask tough questions of our government officials, cultural institutions, and citizenry. The declaration of war against terrorism, in itself, is not sufficient justification for the passage of invasive and constitutionally suspect government powers, or calls for military action against nations. A true patriot will ensure that the actions of our government are just and reasonable.

Our Constitution is rarely tested in times of tranquility, but is severely tested in times of tension, turmoil, and tragedy. We must remember to embrace the principles of our Constitution--our contract for democracy and freedom--which others seek to destroy. They shall not succeed. My heart and prayers go out to all those who lost someone dear to them. Know that I share your pain, and that I will never forget the sacrifice your families made in the name of America.